CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and
listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A method for determining a portion of
total costs for each entity of a plurality of entities, the
total costs relating to a total maximum number of accesses of
all the entities occurring in a predetermined time window
over a time interval having a plurality of time windows, to a
product, and there exists a predetermined relationship
between the total maximum number of accesses of all the
entities and the total costs, the method which comprises the
steps of:

obtaining, for each of the entities, a maximum value relating
to a maximum number of accesses of the entity in all the time
windows over the time interval resulting in a group of
maximum values for the plurality of entities;

finding a smallest maximum value among the group of maximum
values for all the entities;

distributing costs for the smallest maximum value among all

the entities having access to the product in the time

interval;

finding a next-higher maximum value among the group of

maximum values;

determining a difference in costs for the smallest maximum

value and the next-higher maximum value from the

predetermined relationship;

distributing the difference in costs among the entities

having an equivalent or a higher maximum value than the next-

higher maximum value;

repeatedly finding a further next-higher maximum value among

the group of maximum values and distributing a determined

difference in costs for the further next-higher maximum value

among the entities having an equivalent or a higher maximum

value;

accumulating the costs obtained in the steps of distributing

for each of the entities individually to obtain an

accumulated cost result; and

outputting the portion of the total costs for each of the

entities based on the accumulated cost result for each of the

entities.

Claim 2 (original): The method according to claim 1, which

comprises calculating the total costs by combining the total

maximum numbers of accesses in more than one time interval,

in which the maximum value for each of the entities obtained

in the obtaining step is calculated by using a maximum of the

maximum number of accesses in the more than one time interval

as the maximum value for the entity for the more than one

time interval.

Claim 3 (original): The method according to claim 2, which

comprises performing the repeatedly finding step until a

highest maximum value among the entities is processed in a

case where the total maximum number of accesses of all the

entities is equal to the maximum value of a single one of the

entities.

Claim 4 (original): The method according to claim 1, wherein

in a case where the total maximum number of accesses is

produced by more than one of the entities, performing the

following steps before performing the outputting step:

calculating a residual cost being a difference between the

total maximum number of accesses and a highest maximum value

of a single one of the entities; and

distributing the residual cost among all the entities

equally, and the portion of the total costs for each of the

entities equals the accumulated cost result plus a part of

the residual costs distributed to each of the entities.

Claim 5 (original): The method according to claim 1, which

comprises:

organizing at least one of the entities into a plurality of

sub-entities;

providing a maximum value of accesses for each of the sub-

entities; and

distributing the portion of the total costs of the entity

among the sub-entities based on percentage ratios derived

from the predetermined relationship.

Claim 6 (original): The method according to claim 5, which

comprises performing the distributing of the portion of the

total costs of the entity step with the following sub-steps:

calculating a ratio of the costs for the maximum value of a

sub-entity to the costs for the maximum value of the entity

from the predetermined relationship;

calculating a cost amount by multiplying the ratio by the

portion of the total costs for the entity; and

distributing the cost amount among the sub-entities having a

maximum value equal to or greater than the maximum value, on

which the cost amount is based.

Claim 7 (original): The method according to claim 1, which

comprises setting the costs to be license costs for the

product.

Claim 8 (original): The method according to claim 1, which

comprises forming the entities as cost centers.

Claim 9 (original): The method according to claim 5, which

comprises forming the entities as business units, and the

sub-entities as cost centers.

Claim 10 (original): The method according to claim 1, which

comprises:

allowing a plurality of users to have access to the product;

attributing each of the users to one of the entities; and

performing the obtaining steps to include the following sub-
steps:

counting a number of accesses of the users attributed to

the entity in subsequent time windows to obtain a series

of access numbers for the time interval; and

searching for a maximum access number in the series to

obtain the maximum value for the entity in the time

interval.

Claim 11 (original): A method for determining a portion of

total costs for each entity of a plurality of entities, the

total costs relating to a total maximum number of accesses

for all of the entities occurring in a predetermined time

window over a time interval having a plurality of time

windows, to a product, and there exists a predetermined

relationship between the total maximum number of accesses of

all the entities and the total costs, the method which

comprises the steps of:

obtaining, for each of the entities, a maximum value relating
to a maximum number of accesses of the entity in all the time
windows over the time interval resulting in a group of
maximum values;

finding a highest maximum value among the group of maximum
values for the entities;

finding a next-lower maximum value among the group of maximum
values;

determining a difference in cost for the highest maximum
value and the next-lower maximum value from the predetermined
relationship;

distributing the difference in cost to the entity having the
highest maximum value;

repeatedly finding another next-lower maximum value among the
group of maximum values and distributing a determined
difference for the next-lower maximum value among the
entities having an equivalent or a higher maximum value; and

accumulating the costs obtained in the steps of distributing

for each of the individual entities to obtain an accumulated

cost result and outputting the portion of the total costs for

each of the entities based on the accumulated result for each

of the entities.

Claims 12-13 (cancelled).

Claim 14 (previously presented): An apparatus for determining

a portion of total costs for each entity of a plurality of

entities, the total costs relating to a total maximum number

of accesses of all the entities occurring in a predetermined

time window over a time interval having a plurality of time

windows, to a product, and there exists a predetermined

relationship between the total maximum number of accesses of

all the entities and the total costs, the apparatus

comprising:

    means for obtaining, for each of the entities, a maximum

    value relating to a maximum number of accesses of the

    entity in all time windows over the time interval

    resulting in a group of maximum values;

    means for finding the smallest maximum value among the

    group of maximum values for the entities;

means for distributing costs for the smallest maximum

value among all the entities having access to the

product in the time interval;

means for finding a next-higher maximum value among the

group of maximum values;

means for determining a difference in costs for the

smallest maximum value and the next-higher maximum value

from the predetermined relationship;

means for distributing the difference in costs among the

entities having an equivalent or a higher maximum value

than the next-higher value;

means for repeatedly finding a further next-higher

maximum value among the entities and distributing a

determined difference in costs for the further next-

higher maximum value among the entities having an

equivalent or a higher maximum value; and

means for accumulating costs obtained for each of the

entities individually to obtain an accumulated cost

result and output the portion of the total costs for

each of the entities based on the accumulated result for

each of the entities.

Claim 15 (previously presented): An apparatus for determining

a portion of total costs for each entity of a plurality of

entities, the total costs relating to a total maximum number

of accesses of all the entities occurring in a predetermined

time window over a time interval having a plurality of time

windows, to a product, and there exists a predetermined

relationship between the total maximum number of accesses of

all the entities and the total costs, the apparatus

comprising:

    means for obtaining, for each of the entities, a maximum

    value relating to a maximum number of accesses of the

    entity in all the time windows over the time interval

    resulting in a group of maximum values for the entities;

    means for finding the highest maximum value among the

    group of maximum values for the entities;

    means for finding a next-lower maximum value among the

    group of maximum values;

means for determining a difference in cost for the
highest maximum value and the next-lower maximum value
from the predetermined relationship;

means for distributing the difference costs to the
entity having the highest maximum value;

means for repeatedly finding another next-lower maximum
value among the group of maximum values and distributing
a determined difference for the other next-lower maximum
value among the entities having an equivalent or a
higher maximum value; and

means for accumulating the costs obtained for each of
the entities individually to obtain an accumulated cost
result and output the portion of the total costs for
each of the entities based on the accumulated result for
each of the entities.